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FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1026  
INFO RUEHBZ/AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE 0201  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0306  
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0317  
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 0216  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0160  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0156  
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0507  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0491  
RUEPGDA/USEUCOM JIC VAIHINGEN GE  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0148  
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0478  
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 1291

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGUI 000195

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C  
INR FOR CNEARY  
DRL FOR SCRAMPTON  
IO FOR TBROWN  
PARIS FOR RKANEDA  
LONDON FOR PLORD  
NAIROBI FOR AKARAS  
AFRICOM FOR JKUGEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREF](#) [CT](#)

SUBJECT: ETHNIC VIOLENCE INCREASINGLY LIKELY IN NORTHEASTERN CAR

REF: A. A 09 BANGUI 190 AND PREVIOUS  
[1](#)B. B 09 BANGUI 181

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[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: One of our best sources of information on events in the provinces of Bamingui-Bangoran and Vakaga has been a Burkina Faso-born U.S. citizen who has been the director of a medical NGO in the CAR. His organization has clinics spread across the area and his reporting and observations have been consistently accurate and confirmed by other sources. On September 3, 2009, DCM and POLOFF met with him following his last visit to the Vakaga. Traveling by motorcycle and by foot, he visited a large part of the conflict zone over the last month and echoed what Post has been hearing with increasing frequency; that the specter of renewed ethnic violence looms ever larger between the Kara and Youlu ethnicities on one side, and the Goula on the other, when the rains relent in November/December. The Ambassador and DCM voiced Post's concerns to Prime Minister Touadera during a September 5 meeting, but Toudera remains hopeful that a June 3rd peace accord will hold (Ref A). Nevertheless, what started as a rivalry over economic resources appears to deteriorating into increasingly ethnic discord. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) To give some context to the scale of the issue:

-- According to the 2003 government census, there were just over 52,000 people in the Vakaga.

-- There are thought to be 60,000 today with 40,000 being Goula and related tribes. The rest are Kara, Youlu, Sara, Houssa and a few smaller groups.

-- Though the Goula far outnumber the Kara and Youlu, the Kara

can call on support from the Ta'asha tribe in Sudan.

13. (SBU) According to the NGO contact, the Kara and Youlu are demanding complete control of the road between Birao and Bria to the south as a condition for peace. South of Birao, this road is lined with Goula villages and provides access to game parks, diamond fields, and trade centers. Although the underlying reasons remain economic, the average Kara, Youlu and Goula are becoming increasingly polarized along ethnic lines, sparking tit-for-tat raids and reprisals. Travelers are questioned at militia checkpoints about their names and the names of their families to determine ethnic identities. People with the wrong name have suffered severe consequences.

14. (SBU) The contact said that two weeks ago, a Kara internally displaced persons (IDP) camp outside of Delembe was attacked in retribution for an attack by the Kara on Seregobo, a Goula village. The whole camp was destroyed but there is no word if anyone was killed. The attack was not reported by CAR media, but the lack expedient reports from the region are common given travel difficulties (roads are currently impassable by vehicle).

15. (SBU) COMMENT: Unfortunately it appears that the June accord has not led to a durable peace, and the dry season will enable rebel groups to move more freely throughout the region. Most observers of the conflict in the provinces of Bamingui-Bangoran and Vakaga, especially the CARG and other Bangui based observers, are inclined to dismiss the conflict as simple ``ethnic conflict'' unrelated to the larger political struggles in the CAR. AmEmbassy Bangui has long rejected this explanation, believing instead that here too, as elsewhere in the Central African Republic, conflict was driven primarily by the political and economic ambitions of a small number of individuals. The simplest hypothesis is that the UFDR is disintegrating and that is creating a power vacuum which be being filled by new groups with new leaders. While the protagonists in the western CAR have

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been identified for some time, it is much harder to get information on what is happening in the northeast due to the distance, lack of roads, and government opposition to travel in the area. This makes us uncomfortably dependent on secondary sources. Never the less, we believe our analysis to be correct as it is shared by some traditional leaders. We note that as MINURCAT expands their own Intel capabilities, their conclusions increasingly echo ours. Some issues to consider:

-- The UN Mission in Chad and the CAR (MINURCAT) has a base outside of Birao, Vakaga, but does not currently have the mandate or capacity to directly intervene in inter-tribal conflict. They are struggling come to grips with the dichotomy between their mission - protect refugees and NGO's from cross border raids by the Sudanese government and the reality of the situation - an internal CAR focused conflict.

-- The World Food Program had placed some two hundred tons of food in Birao, to meet the needs of a thousand people until the end of the rains in December. Some three thousand people showed up for the August feeding and consumed 150 tons of food. The WFP forsee a need for USD 2 M to airlift food to Birao in September through December. They further warn that this is based on the need in the Birao area only. (People who are close enough to walk to Birao.) They hear rumors of hunger in Tiringoulu and elsewhere, but have no way to assess the real needs or to address them if known. The long term prognosis could be terrible as even when the rains end, the next planting season is not until June 2010 and the next harvest not until November 2010. Large scale fighting could disrupt this even more. WFP are currently underprepared for this eventuality.

-- Between violence and hunger, the Vakaga region could increasingly become an exporter of refugees to the already overburdened systems in Chad and Sudan.

-- Continued insurgency and instability will undermine the electoral process in the northeastern region of CAR (Ref B). END

COMMENT.  
COOK